ENGL 3301.201 Technical and Professional Writing

Summer I 2018
MTWR; 2:00-3:55 pm; OCNR 243

Catalog Description

English 3301 is an introductory technical writing course designed to help students gain practical experience in finding and interpreting information and writing reports and documents for specialized audiences in the professional world.

Required Materials


Required Technologies

- Basic emailing, web browsing, and word processing skills
- A computer with reliable Internet access and a reliable office software suite. TAMUCC provides students with access to Office 365; visit [it.tamucc.edu/Office365/Office365.html](http://it.tamucc.edu/Office365/Office365.html)

Student Learning Outcomes
By engaging in the course activities, students will

1. identify a need or problem by describing the factors involved
2. generate a viable solution to the need or problem
3. create a document that reflects an effective interweaving of purpose and audience.

Writing Workshop This class is designed as a hands-on writing workshop class. You will have an active role as you work on the phases of each project and respond to the work of your classmates and receive on your work. This class is designed to give you experiences that are similar to those you will experience in the workplace so you will also receive feedback from others outside the class. We will work on your assignments every day. The work is on-going and hands-on. Writing is an active process and the more you actively participate, the better results you will see in your writing progress.

Peer Review. Professional writing means always having someone (usually a supervisor or co-worker) read, evaluate, and assess your work before it "goes out." As a regular part of the class, you will submit drafts to class of what you have written, and your classmates will review it for you. "Draft" means "as good as you can make it," not a few lines thrown together. If you do not have a draft posted for peer review when it is assigned, that portion of the assignment will be docked a ten percent penalty of your portfolio’s final grade.

Grading

Major Project 1: Writing in Your Field Reference Sheet

20% of final grade;
You will survey the kinds of writing individuals in your intended career do and arrange the information in a table. You will provide a short description of each different kind of writing, identify typical audiences and purposes, and classify the kinds of writing, matching the items to the chapters in our textbook and resources online via hyperlinks. This chart will be the basis of our next piece of writing, the Research Report, and a go-to resource once you are in the workplace.

Major Project 2: Writing in Your Field Research Report

30% of final grade;
This report begins with the documents you described in the Reference Sheet you created for Project 1. To complete this research report, choose three significantly different documents from your reference sheet, locate real examples of those documents, and complete a more in-depth analysis of each document’s generic and rhetorical features.
Write up a report that describes the important purposes, audiences, genres, styles, and other specialized aspects of writing in the field you choose, describing them to someone outside or unfamiliar with that field.
Blackboard Discussions & Homework Activities

30% of final grade; due each week before class
Explore and practice methods, strategies, and principles of technical communication. Generally these activities will consist of reading, working an exercise or working through a case based on that reading, and responding to the work of your classmates.

Chapter Quizzes

10% of final grade; two quizzes each week for the first five weeks of the course
Show your mastery of material from the textbook through reading quizzes based on each chapter. Practice quizzes are available at the publisher’s website.

Drafts & Peer Review

10% of final grade; 4 formal peer review sessions
Work through multi-phase drafting and review processes with outside readers. Peer review is an opportunity to learn from and with your classmates, rather than just a chance to yell at someone else for using semicolons incorrectly. We will use these sessions to review and work with each other’s documents in a supportive and collaborative environment, as well as to get feedback from your instructor.

All of your major work will be submitted via Blackboard. Although the class won't be completely paperless, posting your work on line will save paper, will save you money by limiting the amount you need to print, and will also insure your work is readily available to you wherever on the planet you happen to be.

10% will be based on professional responsibility; for each portfolio, if all of your work is submitted on time, including rough drafts, peer review, and in daily work, you will earn 2½ points. If these are not completed on time, you will not earn these points.

15% will come from your in-class writing and your abstract reflections about reading.

Citations: I prefer that you use MLA format when documenting or citing material; however, if your academic "home discipline" uses another, I will accept that provided you let me know what it is and can "point" me to some style guidelines for that format. (I am familiar enough with APA and Chicago that I don't need a style sheet for either).
Attendance/Late Work

I see this class as very much like you’re a job. The responsibility is yours to determine if your reasons are legitimate or worth it, based on the following attendance & late work policies. These policies are designed so that you may miss class or turn in late work without having to tell me why or fear that you will suffer dire consequences. They are not penalty-free, however. Instead, they function as a safety net, similar to sick-leave policies in a workplace. If you do have problems that require late work or absences, they will keep you from failing the course outright just because you get sick, run into technical difficulties, and have family issues, etc.—as long as you use them sparingly. But they are set up so that you will think twice, weigh the pros and cons, before using them indiscriminately.

- There is no such thing as "excused" or "unexcused" absences; these policies will apply no matter what the reason. You do not have to show documentation to the instructor.
- You may take a maximum of two (2) absences with no consequences other than missed in-class work. Because each class is a workshop—we do things in class to help you learn—they cannot be ‘made up.’ Missing even one class can cause problems, thus this policy.
- To be considered present, you must be on time, participate in all class activities, and remain in class for the entire period. Leaving early, coming in significantly late, or refusing to participate in in-class work will result in an absence and zero credit for any in-class work that day.
- Please keep the contact information for another student in class to find out about what you missed.
- You may turn in assignments up to two days past the due date. However, your grade will automatically drop one letter grade for each day late. That means each day, not each class period.
- No work will be accepted later than threedays after the due date.
- In-class work or workshop participation credit may not be made up or turned in late; however, extra credit opportunities may be available to help make up for lost workshop credit. (Note: extra credit will be applied only to missed workshop credit, not to exams or major assignments.)

In-class Conduct

In general, treat each other and the instructor with respect and follow simple standards of common courtesy. Here are a few specifics:

- Please turn off all cell phones or other electronic communication devices and place them out of sight (in a bag, purse, pocket) while in class.
- Do not use your time in English 3301 to work on assignments for other classes.
- Computers are to be used for English 3301 work only. No shopping, no Facebook, etc. Those who consistently violate this policy will be asked to leave. You will also be counted absent and lose credit for any in-class work that day.
• Do not talk or make excessive noise while the instructor or another student is speaking to the class as a whole. (This includes typing on the keyboard or clicking the mouse.)
• When group work is assigned in class, you must work in a group, not as an individual.
• During group work time, please stay on task and work cooperatively with other group members.

Late Assignments

If you have an emergency and cannot submit a paper, write a memo to me to explain why you will not be able to meet the deadline. Keep in mind that in the workplace there would be serious consequences for turning in reports/projects late. Based on your memo, I will determine how much to deduct from your grade. BE SURE to include documentation such as doctor's office statements, court appearance papers, etc.

Writing Center. The Writing Center, part of Texas A&M University-Corpus Christi’s Center for Academic Student Achievement (CASA), provides free help for students at any stage in the writing process. Writing center consultants are trained to work with writers one-on-one to help them find ideas, organize their thoughts, cite sources, and succeed at all aspects of the writing task. The writing center works closely with faculty across campus to understand the writing projects they assign and to help students meet the expectations of those assignments. The writing center is located in the Glasscock building. Both drop-in and scheduled appointments are available. More information, including hours of operation, is available at http://casa.tamu.cc/wc.php.

Academic Honesty

I will follow the policy that appears in the university catalogue. Plagiarism, which is “the presentation of work of another as one's own work” is only one form of academic dishonesty, which also includes falsification (the intentional alteration of information), fabrication (the intentional invention of information), multiple submission (using the same material for two separate assignments or courses without permission from the instructors), and abuse of academic materials (the intentional destruction of resource materials). Sometimes students commit unintentional plagiarism (not citing sources properly, for example) because they are unaware of the standards that apply. If you are unsure of how to document or properly use information, please check with me WELL BEFORE THE PAPER IS DUE. Also, know that I have some heavy-duty anti-plagiarism web applications, so you'll probably get caught. If you have questions or doubts about what constitutes a breach of integrity, a violation of policies or a proper citation, it is important that you consult with me. The SMALLEST penalty you will get if you are caught is a zero on the project; you could, potentially fail the course, and, if you have plagiarized in other classes, you may face disciplinary action by the university.

I only feel it fair to notice that this issue is something the university is "Hot and Bothered" about right now, and that, if we suspect something, we are now REQUIRED to notify the administration. This isn't something we can keep "in house" any more.
Worse, you may have to eat haggis.

All of this can be avoided simply by doing your own work to the best of your ability.

**Academic Advising**

The College of Liberal Arts requires that students meet with an Academic Advisor as soon as they are ready to declare a major. Degree plans are prepared in the CLA Academic Advising Center. The University uses an online Degree Audit system. Any amendment must be approved by the Department Chair and the Office of the Dean. All courses and requirements specified in the final degree plan audit must be completed before a degree will be granted. The CLA Academic Advising Office is located in Driftwood #203. For more information please call 361-825-3466.

**Grade Appeal Process**

As stated in University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*, a student who believes that he or she has not been held to appropriate academic standards as outlined in the class syllabus, equitable evaluation procedures, or appropriate grading, may appeal the final grade given in the course. The burden of proof is upon the student to demonstrate the appropriateness of the appeal. A student with a complaint about a grade is encouraged to first discuss the matter with the instructor. For complete details, including the responsibilities of the parties involved in the process and the number of days allowed for completing the steps in the process, see University Procedure 13.02.99.C2.03, *Student Grade Appeals*. These documents are accessible online at: [http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf](http://academicaffairs.tamucc.edu/rules_procedures/assets/13.02.99.C0.03_student_grade_appeals.pdf). For assistance and/or guidance in the grade appeal process, students may contact the Associate Dean’s office in the college in which the course is taught. For complete details on the process of submitting a formal grade appeal in CLA, please visit the College of Liberal Arts website, [http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html](http://cla.tamucc.edu/about/student-resources.html).

**Students with Disabilities**

**Disabilities Accommodations**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please call or visit Disability Services at (361) 825-5816 in Corpus Christi Hall 116.

If you are a returning veteran and are experiencing cognitive and/or physical access issues in the classroom or on campus, please contact the Disability Services office for assistance at (361) 825-5816.

**Dropping a Class**

I hope that you never find it necessary to drop this or any other class. However, events can sometimes occur that make dropping a course necessary or wise. *Please consult with your academic advisor, the Financial Aid Office, and me, before you decide to drop this course.* Should dropping the course be the best course of action, you must initiate the process to drop the course by going to the Student Services Center and filling out a course drop form. Just stopping attendance and participation WILL NOT automatically result in your being dropped
from the class. June 15, 2018 is the last day to drop a class with an automatic grade of “W” this term.

Reminder to English Majors

As part of the English undergraduate capstone course (ENGL 4351), all English majors are required to submit a portfolio of writings in different discourse genres that they have completed for their college classes. To help you prepare for this assignment, you should keep a copy of all essays, research papers, literary analyses, creative and report writing, etc., so that you will have an ample selection from which to choose when the portfolio comes due.

Tentative Course Schedule (subject to change):

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<th>Week One</th>
<th>May 29-31</th>
<th>Intro to the course</th>
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<td>Discuss Chapter 1 &amp; 2</td>
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<td>Exercise: p. 13, #2 due on Bb</td>
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<td>Discuss Chapter 7</td>
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<td>Exercise: p. 35, #3 due on Bb</td>
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<td>Ch 1&amp;2 quizzes due by Friday on Bb</td>
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<td>Week Two</td>
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<td>Discuss Chapter 3</td>
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<td>Discuss Chapter 5</td>
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<td>Exercise p. 77, #3 due on Bb</td>
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<td>Ch 3&amp;4 quizzes due by Friday on Bb</td>
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<td>Week Three</td>
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<td>Discuss Chapter 4</td>
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<td>Exercise p. 109, #4 due on Bb</td>
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<td>Ch 5&amp;6 quizzes due by Friday on Bb</td>
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<td>Discuss Chapter 9</td>
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<td>Exercise p. 272, #1 due on Bb</td>
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<td>Discuss Chapter 10</td>
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<td>Exercise p. 307, #2 due on Bb</td>
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<td>Ch 9&amp;10 quizzes due by Friday on Bb</td>
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<td>What is Technical Communication, Again?</td>
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<td>Document Design</td>
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<td>Active/Passive Voice &amp; Parallelism</td>
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<td>Week Four</td>
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<td>Rhetorical Situations &amp; Genres</td>
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<td>Major Project: Writing in your Field Reference Sheet due</td>
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<td>Ethics, Visuals &amp; Graphics</td>
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<td>Information Architecture: Headings, Paragraphs, and Sections</td>
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<td>Discuss Heming &amp; Bremer article</td>
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<td>Week Five</td>
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<td>Audience &amp; Specificity</td>
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<td>Progress Report</td>
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<td>Major Project: Writing in your Field Research Report due</td>
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* Due dates are tentative
In Conclusion

This should be a worthwhile and even enjoyable class. You can count on me to make class as interesting and as stimulating as possible. Finally, I am here to help you, but I cannot do so unless you let me know when you need help. Communicate.